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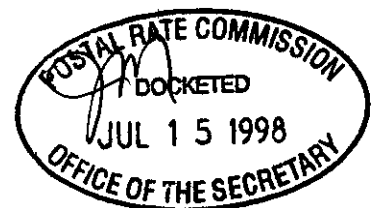
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

BEFORE THE
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

MAILING ONLINE SERVICE

Docket No. MC98-1

DIRECT TESTIMONY
OF
FRANK E. CAMPANELLI
ON BEHALF OF
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE



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Direct Testimony
of
Frank E. Campanelli

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

1 My name is Frank Campanelli. I own the Franklin Painting Company in Avon,
2
3 Connecticut. I have been a painting contractor for 16 years. I located my business in
4 Avon four and a half years ago after eight years in Hartford.

5 We are residential specialists at Franklin Painting Company, doing interior and
6 exterior painting as well as remodeling and paper hanging. During the spring and
7 summer months — our peak season — the company employs eight to ten people.
8 During the winter months we scale back to four or five.

1 **I. PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY**

2 As a Mailing Online customer, I have been asked by the U.S. Postal Service to
3 discuss my business and how Mailing Online has helped it.

4 **II. MY BUSINESS AND DIRECT MAIL**

5 Direct mail has always been a critical element in my business. In fact, I would
6 describe it as my life's blood in many ways. This was certainly the case when I was
7 starting out in the residential painting business. I literally bombed the marketplace with
8 hundreds of thousands of direct mail pieces to establish a niche and to develop a word-
9 of-mouth reputation.

10 Word-of-mouth is important in my business since I work exclusively with
11 homeowners and not with building contractors. Residential work is very much an
12 individual, one-on-one relationship and in order to grow my company I have to target
13 mailings telling recipients that we have operated in their neighborhoods. That way I can
14 raise the comfort level of potential customers who can knock on their neighbor's door
15 and ask about Franklin Painting and the kind of job we do. Satisfied customers can
16 also pass along our name to their friends and they are a source of recommendations.
17 This entire process begins with targeted mailings. All in all, I have found that the
18 system works for me and it is far more effective than mass advertising for my type of
19 business.

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1 **III. MY REACTION TO MAILING ONLINE**

2 I have been using Mailing Online since June 3, 1998, the day after I was made
3 aware of this service through an information card that was placed in my post office box.
4 The concept appealed to me immediately given my reliance on direct mailings. It also
5 appealed to me because I have always been attracted to these kinds of technological
6 developments.

7 As a boy, I was constantly tinkering with electronic items I picked up at Radio
8 Shack. I carried this interest with me into adulthood and I have been using the
9 computer and related communications services for years. I keep my books on my PC;
10 stay in touch with my crews on a cell phone; and people keep track of me on my
11 beeper. I do 80 percent of my big ticket purchases through the internet. Clearly, I was
12 a good prospect for something like Mailing Online.

13 I was also attracted to this particular opportunity because I have had good
14 experiences with the Postal Service. I have done my banking through the mail, sending
15 checks and deposits this way. I never lost anything in the mail. Everything I have ever
16 sent has reached its destination. I am fully aware that like any huge bureaucracy the
17 Postal Service has its problems, but I also know that the agency has been working hard
18 to improve. My impression is that it is now leaner and meaner than most old-line blue
19 chip companies, or at least is on par with these companies as far as its operations go.

20 And because of this, I was not surprised to learn that the Postal Service was
21 offering this service. In fact, my first thought was "it's about time." As I said, the agency
22 is working hard to upgrade its products and improve its services. This is a perfect fit
23 and I'm more than willing to pay for the convenience.

1 I am also very appreciative that the Postal Service is thinking of the small
2 business owner with this type of product. The agency has provided a cost effective way
3 for small businesses to reach out into the community and grow. It is nice to know that
4 we are getting this attention focused on us. Providing products and services for small
5 businesses is not a priority for most large corporations.

6 **IV. MY EXPERIENCE WITH THE SERVICE**

7 As with most businesses, time is money for me, and Mailing Online has been a
8 phenomenal time saver. It used to take me anywhere from a day to a day and a half to
9 send out a 3,000 piece mailing. Now, it takes me about two hours. I can prepare a
10 small mailing of 400 to 700 pieces in 20 minutes. When I price a painting job, the first
11 thing I tell a potential customer is that my estimate will be based on the time it takes me
12 to do the work. So I understand and really appreciate what Mailing Online is doing for
13 me in the way of time savings.

14 Another important benefit has been that Mailing Online has made it easy to clean
15 my address lists. This is critical to me now because the person who had been helping
16 me with list preparation is getting out of that business and I am going to be responsible
17 for assembling new lists. This ability to clean my lists is coming at the best possible
18 time.

19 I must say that I have been fully satisfied with Mailing Online. Everything has
20 worked out great. The people involved with Mailing Online have been accommodating
21 and they follow up dutifully whenever I have a question about the service.

1 As I hope I have made clear, I value Mailing Online and I certainly hope it will be
2 continued beyond the test period I have been participating in these past four months.
3 Frankly, the user cannot lose with the tools provided by Mailing Online. It is a very
4 intuitive product and that contributes to its efficiency and effectiveness.

5 I appreciate having this opportunity to tell you about my positive experiences with
6 Mailing Online. It has done wonders for my business and I am sure that I am not a
7 voice in the wilderness on this. No doubt, there are thousands, perhaps many
8 thousands, of small business owners – and large businesses as well – who could use
9 Mailing Online. I hope this useful innovation is made available to them.